

Wish by tiigi

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Summary:

The damage was done. His fate was sealed. Bill Denbrough would forever hate Henry Bowers, and Henry Bowers would hate him right back so that nobody knew how he really felt.

Wish

Author's Note:

I've been struggling to find motivation to do anything lately lol so this is just a short oneshot to get me back into writing. Hope you enjoy! <3

Sometimes, when Henry looks back on his sexual awakening and subsequent sexuality crisis, he thinks of the first day of second grade when he first met Bill Denbrough.

The kid had stumbled in from recess looking bedraggled and out of breath, chubby cheeks flushed red and hair askew, looking like he'd just been hauled through a hedge backwards. Henry was in a similar messy state, although that had more to do with his father's only semi regular beatings. Denbrough had stood out to Henry like a sore thumb.

He'd looked... pretty. Denbrough had looked pretty, with his soft hair matted with leaves and his cute button nose and his big, curious eyes, Henry, probably seven years old back then, had taken one look at Bill and his first thought had been 'pretty'. He'd wanted to run his fingers through Bill's hair. He'd wanted to hold his hand.

His father told him only faggots held hands with other boys. Henry didn't know what a faggot was, but it didn't sound fun and he didn't want to be one. Most of all, he didn't want his father to get that scrunched up, angry looking expression he got sometimes, whenever Henry made him mad. When he got mad, he got dangerous, harsher with the belt and generous with the alcohol.

Henry wasn't going to make his father angry. Henry Bowers was no

faggot, and for the first time in what would start a year long feud between them, Henry felt the first inkling of anger towards William Denbrough. It started off as a tickle in his stomach. When Bill threw his head back and laughed at one of Tozier's dumb jokes, his eyes twinkled. The tickle became an itch under his skin. When little Eddie Kaspbrak spilt strawberry milkshake all over himself and Bill gave him his, the itch became a flame, licking at his ankles.

By the time school was finished, Henry was so mad at Bill Denbrough's stupid pretty face and his stupid, selfless good deeds that the flame was a roaring inferno, so sweltering hot that he couldn't ignore it any longer. He'd caught Denbrough outside of school, waited as Bill had walked past him on his way out of the gates only to lunge forward and shove him at the last second. Bill, not expecting a sudden attack while his back was turned, shrieked and windmilled his arms as he fell, face first, onto the tarmac.

He'd started crying almost immediately. He must only have been five or six back then so it wasn't really surprising, but Henry had sneered and taken it as a sign of weakness, only sissy boys cried, his father said, and his father would know because Butch Bowers was a police officer and that's as tough as they come.

"Crybaby," Henry had taunted, becoming even more infuriated at how guilty he felt. He was just showing Denbrough that he wasn't a sissy or a faggot, he was just showing him who was in charge.

"You're a b-bully, B-Bowers!" Bill had stuttered in between his tears, wiping the back of his hand across his cheeks angrily. Henry was struck dumb for a moment, nobody had ever called him a bully before. Sure, other kids seemed a little uneasy if he demanded they give him the glue stick and parents in the playground always seemed to steer their kids away from Henry if he got too close, but that

wasn't because he was a *bully*. That was just how boys acted!

"Shut up, freak!" Henry spat, fingers curling into fists like he's seen his father do a hundred times. It never failed to scare Henry, and it seemed to work the same way on Bill. "Shut up, Stuttering B-B-Billy."

It wasn't worth it, Henry decided, when he saw Bill's face start to crumple and flush red with heat and humiliation. Fresh tears welled in his big, big eyes and his bottom lip trembled as he struggled to keep them from spilling over; Henry wished he could take it back, but that would make him just as weak as Bill and he couldn't have that. He glowered at Bill as Bill glared right back at him, and in that moment he vowed, even if he couldn't take it back this time, that he'd never say it again. He never wanted to see that heartbroken look on Bill's face ever again.

A tittering laugh from behind them rippled through the crowd of children forming in the doorway, "stuttering B-B-Billy!" Someone repeated with a peal of laughter, and that was it. The damage was done. His fate was sealed. Bill Denbrough would forever hate Henry Bowers, and Henry Bowers would hate him right back so that nobody knew how he really felt.

Looking back on it, Henry always finds that his chest aches and his eyes sting to think that it all started with a mean nickname and a stupid, sissy crush.

Henry watched as Bill grew up. He was only ever a grade above Denbrough and his loser friends, but he had three years on them and it made a big difference. Bill was a cute kid right up until he wasn't a

cute kid anymore, and those few months where Henry was fifteen and Bill was twelve, teetering on the edge of puberty, not quite a teenager but not quite a child anymore, were some of the most confusing of Henry's life.

As he grew up, his interests changed a little, but then so did Bill's. Henry made some friends: Belch and Vic and Patrick, who understood him without needing words. He was a bully, and they were all bullies, and that was the way they liked it so *fuck you Denbrough*—

At thirteen, Henry discovered jerking off. At fourteen he had it down to an art and at fifteen years old he was doing frantically, three times a day usually, and almost always about Denbrough. Bill also changed over those three years, which didn't quite quell the guilt altogether but did help subdue it. He wasn't a little kid anymore, Henry rationalised. He never grew out of his stutter but he did grow - period - into a lanky twelve year old with soft looking hair and a cute button nose and big, curious eyes.

In the privacy of his own bedroom, after his father was passed out drunk in the armchair downstairs, Henry would bite his knuckles and jerk himself off furiously to the thought of Denbrough's silky hair wrapped around his fist. It wasn't gay, Patrick had assured him, to get off on that sort of shit. He wasn't a faggot if he wanted to be on top.

Typically, Denbrough also got more and more annoying the older he got, as did his dumb group of friends. Stanley Uris, the Jewish kid with the dumb curls that Henry wanted to tug on, Eddie Kaspbrak, the sick boy whose fannypack resembled a well equipped portable drug store, Richie Tozier, whose dumb fucking mouth Henry always wanted to pummel, and now Beverly Marsh, the latest edition to their

group.

Beverly was the only one he could pay attention to. If he wanted to interact with the others, he had to be a bully.

And he *did*. He did want to talk to Bill, desperately, even just be close to him. He wanted to kiss his pink lips, chapped with the cold, wanted to feel him through his clothes, couldn't do any of that. No, it had to be Beverly Marsh or cruel taunts,

Henry went with both. His gang followed suit. Soon, they had an all out war on their hands.

Henry enjoyed it, as much as it angered him, as much as he'd never admit it. Being yelled at by Bill Denbrough was infinitely better than being ignored, and if all Henry had to do was make some smartass comment about how Beverly had blown him or about how Kaspbrak was a fag momma's boy then what difference did it make? It wasn't much different to what he'd be doing anyway.

Denbrough's crush on her did piss him off, but nowhere near as much as her crush on him did. If he saw them around town, her wrapped around his waist, tucked onto the back of his bicycle, he wouldn't even think about it before he was picking up a rock to hurl at them or cursing them out until they shook with fear.

The thing was, she got to want him. She got to fantasise and daydream, and she got to have those daydreams become a reality. She was a pretty girl, sweet and kind and most importantly *female*, and Henry was the opposite.

Henry didn't get to do any of that. The most Henry got to do was cry into his pillow as he came to the thought of Bill Denbrough for the hundredth time.

So whenever he saw her he made sure to make even more comments, even more innuendos, and so Bill hated him even more and would protect Beverly even more and Henry would get angrier and it was a vicious cycle. Patrick found it entertaining but the others disapproved, Henry could tell. Vic and Belch shifted uncomfortably whenever he crossed the line between cruel and unacceptable and really, anything that made Hockstetter so happy was probably not a good model of behaviour.

It only started becoming a real, tangible problem later, when Henry was repeating senior year for the second time. He was at a party - he didn't know whose or who else had been invited, but Vic and Belch were there and that was all Henry cared about.

It was, until he cut through the living room to get another drink and saw Denbrough and Beverly Marsh huddled close together on an armchair. Her hand was on his thigh and his arm was around her shoulders. They weren't even doing anything but god, Henry had such a visceral reaction that he was left breathless for a few seconds.

He'd found a hookup in record time, a short haired brunette with blue eyes and a flat chest, and had fucked her from behind as he thought about Denbrough. When he came he imagined what it would be like if it had been his hand on Bill's thigh. Henry bet he could do more for him than Beverly Marsh ever could.

But thoughts like that didn't go anywhere– they couldn't. This was all Henry could ever have: fantasies and hook ups and nights spent so blackout drunk that he didn't remember them in the morning.

People like Henry didn't get to have people like Bill Denbrough. That was just the way things were.

They had a routine: Henry bullied Bill and Bill hated him and the cycle would repeat. Silly as it was, Henry thought, it was the only thing that was ever uniquely theirs.

Henry would never get to have Bill in all the ways that he wanted, but he got to have this. He'd take it.

Author's Note:

I've been obsessed with IT rare pairs lately so if you have any specific ship prompts let me know! <3